

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL PROGRESS REPORT ON  
THE SACRAMENTO RIVER FALL CHINOOK WORKGROUP PROGRESS REPORT

At their June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) received a progress report update from the Sacramento River fall Chinook Workgroup (SRWG). The SAS thanks the SRWG for their work to date. The SAS noted this is the first report from the SRWG and they do not have any specific recommendations to provide at this stage. However, the SAS discussed several items they hope will be considered as work proceeds.

The Sacramento River system is unique, with hatcheries playing a critical role in sustaining fish stocks. Water resource management decisions and habitat projects that are outside of the Council's jurisdiction have a large impact on the survival of both hatchery- and natural-origin fish in the system, and efforts made to benefit natural-origin fish will also benefit hatchery fish since they utilize the same waterways. Parentage-based tagging may help increase our understanding of fish movement in the Central Valley.

The SAS discussed the question of if a conservation objective should be based on maximizing  $S_{MSY}$  or maximizing production, and noted they would appreciate seeing an analysis of habitat and hatchery needs before providing any specific recommendations. They noted that, given the above considerations, a conservation objective that considers fish returning to both natural areas and fish returning to hatcheries may be the most appropriate. Furthermore, the SAS would like the SRWG to strongly consider moving forward with a "natural area" component that consists of a natural/hatchery aggregate rather than parsing the two apart.

Sacramento River fall Chinook, and the Central Valley, late-fall Chinook evolutionarily significant unit in general, are the most important stock/stock complex in terms of salmon biomass off California and Oregon. In addition to supporting fisheries, this complex is also important to Sacramento River Winter Run Chinook (SRWC), an endangered species. The abundance of the stock complex is largely dependent on hatchery fish via direct hatchery production and through hatchery fish spawning in the natural environment and thus contributing to natural area production. Thus, maintaining a robust hatchery component is not just vital to fisheries, but also to SRWC.

The SAS appreciates the Council providing the SRWG with the resources necessary to continue this important work and looks forward to future updates and discussions on the issue.

PFMC  
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